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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAR 28 1968
TELETYPE

FBI MEMPHIS

813PM URGENT 3/28/68 CAF

TO DIRECTOR

FROM MEMPHIS (157-1092) 4P

Mr. Tolson
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Wick
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE, MEMPHIS, TENN., ~~RM.~~ Racial Matter

RE MEMPHIS TELS MARCH TWENTY EIGHT.

FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF MASS ACTION IN CONNECTION WITH CAPTIONED STRIKE WHICH BEGAN FEB. TWELVE, NINETEEN SIXTY EIGHT.

ON MARCH TWENTY EIGHT, NINETEEN SIXTY EIGHT, LT. E. H. ARKIN ADVISED THAT SOON AFTER STRIKE STARTED, A GROUP OF ABOUT ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE NEGRO MINISTERS CONNECTED WITH MEMPHIS INTERDENOMINATIONAL MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE FORMED A STRIKE SUPPORT GROUP KNOWN AS "COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE FOR EQUALITY" (COME). THIS GROUP SPONSORED DAILY MARCHES IN DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS AND BOYCOTTING OF DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS IN EFFORT TO FORCE CITY TO GIVE CONCESSIONS TO STRIKERS. THE COME GROUP INVITED MARTIN LUTHER ING, JR. AND SOME OF HIS SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC) TO COME TO MEMPHIS TO SUPPORT STRIKE. KING SPOKE BEFORE -ESTIMATED TWELVE THOUSAND PEOPLE AT MARCH EIGHTEEN RALLY IN SON TEMPLE. MARCH TWENTY-FIVE, NINETEEN SIXTY EIGHT ISSUE OF I-STATE DEFENDER REPORTED PORTIONS OF KING'S SPEECH. HE ~~SAID~~ HE HAD COME TO ESCALATE PRESSURE IN SUPPORT OF STRIKERS AND THAT

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Kevin Maroney
IDIU

TIME HAD COME TO SET ASIDE A DAY FOR A GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE AND BOYCOTT OF SCHOOLS SO MOST STUDENTS AND WORKERS ALIKE COULD PREVENT MEMPHIS FROM FUNCTIONING. HE SAID THAT NOTHING IS EVER DONE WITHOUT THE APPLICATION OF PRESSURE. HE SAID, "AMERICA HAS GIVEN THE BLACK MAN A CHECK THAT HAS BEEN BOUNCING ALL AROUND AND I WANT IT BACKED UP WITH MONEY FROM THE FEDERAL RESERVE. ANYBODY WITH EYES CAN TELL THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THIS NATION. WE ARE SPENDING FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS TO KILL ONE VIET CONG AND ONLY FIFTY THREE DOLLARS A PERSON TO FIGHT POVERTY." HE TOLD THE NEGROES THEY WOULD HAVE POWER WHEN THEY COULD MAKE MEMPHIS MAYOR HENRY LOEB SAY, "YES" WHEN HE WOULD RATHER SAY "NO." HE ASKED THE CROWD, "WHAT PROFIT WAS IT FOR A MAN TO GET THE RIGHT TO EAT AT AN INTEGRATED LUNCH COUNTER WHEN HE DID NOT HAVE MONEY FOR A HAMBURGER AND CUP OF COFFEE OR TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO STOP AT A MOTEL WHEN ONE DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO TAKE A VACATION; IT IS NOTHING SHORT OF CRIMINAL FOR A MAN TO WORK FULL TIME AND RECEIVE A PART TIME INCOME." HE PREDICTED THAT AMERICA WOULD GO TO HELL IF IT DID NOT USE ITS VAST WEALTH TO END POVERTY. THEREAFTER, KING AND THE COME GROUP CALLED FOR A MASS MARCH IN DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS MARCH TWENTY TWO. ARKIN ADDED THAT THIS MARCH CANCELLED DUE TO SIXTEEN

INCH SNOW STORM RESCHEDULED FOR MARCH TWENTY EIGHT. HE SAID THE MARCH STARTED ABOUT ELEVEN AM, MARCH TWENTY EIGHT. KING MADE NO SPEECHES PRIOR TO MARCH AND IN FACT DID NOT JOIN IT UNITL IT HAD PROGRESSED ABOUT ONE BLOCK. HE WALKED WITH NEWSMEN AND OTHER MINISTERS TO INTERSECTION OF MAIN AND BEALE STREETS. THERE HE BECAME AWARE THAT RAMPANT BREAKING OF STORE FRONT WINDOWS AND LOOTING WAS BEING PERPETRATED BY MARCHERS BEHIND HIM. HE TOLD ONE MINISTER, "I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE." KING, ACCOMPANIED Y SEVERAL ASSOCIATES, RAN AHEAD TO MC CALL AND MAIN STREET, UMPED INTO A CAR AND DROVE ONE BLOCK WEST TO FRONT AND MC CALL HERE THEY INDUCED MEMPHIS PD LT. M. E. NICHOLS TO ESCORT THEM TO VERMONT MOTEL SEVERAL MILES SOUTHWEST OF TROUBLE AREA, WHERE HE GISTERED IN AT ELEVEN TWENTY FOUR AM. ARKIN SAID KING AND SOCIATES REMAINED IN ROOM ALL AFTERNOON.

AFTER SPORADIC LOOTING CONTINUED ALL AFTERNOON, AND THIRTY VE HUNDRED NATIONAL GUARDSMEN PLACED ON DUTY IN MEMPHIS AND THE ACING OF A SEVEN PM CURFEW, ARKIN SAID KING IN A TAPED T.V. ERVIEW SAID HE DID NOT FINISH WHAT HE STARTED TO DO. HE DIDN'T BORATE. KING'S ASSOCIATE, REV. RALPH D. ABERNATHY, APPEALED STRIKERS AND STRIKE SYMPATHIZERS TO STAY OFF STREET BUT DID NOT

TELL YOUTH TO STAY OFF STREET. REV. JAMES M. LAWSON, JR., "COME" LEADER, CALLED FOR ADDITIONAL MARCHES MARCH TWENTY NINE AND MARCH THIRTY.

END

BAP

FBI WASH DC

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Included in letter to White House and Attorney General. Date 3/29/68

CRDR- MR. Bishop
Mr. Tamm